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RADIOISOTOPE RESEARCH LABORATORY

(The affiliated facility)

The large-scale availability of radioisotopes as invaluable tools of basic science, agriculture, medicine and industry is by far the most important constructive benefit which was first realized from the development of nuclear energy during the War. Corresponding to this post-war trend, in our University, in 1950, some leading scientists organized a special research committee with an aim to promote the applications of radioisotopes in many research fields. In 1952 the Radioisotope Research Laboratory was inaugurated in an old wooden building in the campus of the University Hospital by a special grant from our Ministry of Education. This Laboratory equipped with some radiation measuring instruments and radiochemical facilities was operated by our Institute and submitted to the common use of many research workers from different faculties and institutes of the University.

Responding to the rapid increase of the use of radioisotopes as well as to the governmental safeguard regulation for handling of radioisotopes and nuclear radiations, the Safeguard Committee for Radioisotope and Radiation was organized formally in December 1960 to control the health physics aspects of the use of radioisotopes and accelerators in the University. In parallel with establishment of the Committee a new building of the Radioisotope Research Laboratory was built in the north campus in July 1960 and belonged to the Institute for Chemical Research as an affiliated facility by a decision of the Committee. This consulting committee of the President is also responsible for administration of the Laboratory, and a sub-committee organized by several professors of various fields and headed by the Director of the Institute is supervising the operation of the Laboratory. Professors S. Shimizu and T. Shigematsu and research staff of their laboratories are operating and supervising the Laboratory as well as taking care of many research workers come to use facilities and instruments in it along the line of policy decided by the above-mentioned committees.

The Laboratory was designed and built as to be convenient for the common use of many research workers of physical, chemical and biological fields using radioisotopes in their own fields. The floor space covers an area of about 700 m^2. There are rooms for physics of nuclear radiation, beta-ray spectrometer, counting of beta- and gamma-ray emitters, synthesis of organic compounds using ^{14}C and ^{3}H, radiochemistry, biological tracer, preparation of beta- and gamma-ray sources, analytical chemistry, auto-radiography, storage of radioisotopes, and others in the first floor, and rooms for Mössbauer effect study, radiochemistry, analytical chemistry, decontamination facility, storage of radioactive waste, switch room, fan room, small workshop and others in the basement. As an annex there is also a greenhouse having a facility for study of photosynthesis by plants in the atmosphere of labelled carbon dioxide. We have a plan to build the second floor as an extension in compliance with increasing demands of the users of this Laboratory.